

**Title**

**Incorporating Catholic Studies Teaching in Business  
Courses**

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## **Abstract**

*According to the U.S. Department of Education's IPEDS system, there are a total of 262 Catholic institutions of higher education in the United States, of which there are 169 with business degree granting programs. Catholic institutions have become a leader in the growth industry of higher education in terms of formation of students. Saint Pope John Paul II's encyclical, 'Ex Corde Ecclesiae', detailed a means for how Catholic higher education could deliver upon the ideals of the church's teachings. Additionally, the curriculum in a business program is designed around an intention for developing exposure and proficiency in the particular area of chosen study. This means the introduction of human formation is almost entirely left upon a single discipline (Philosophy or Theology). Terence Nichols stated that since knowledge adds to the larger whole, each discipline can provide a unique perspective on theological and ethical aspects. Naughton (2012) noted that business ethics should not be viewed as an 'add-on', but rather incorporated into a business program, producing managers informed by characteristics and principles relating to the social teachings. Cardinal Turkson (2012) emphasized that morality has not always been integrated into business, adding that "education and formation is much larger than the objectives of a few ethics courses." Turkson (2012) continues that following such thought, is "to foster the divided life – deformation rather than formation." The challenge for existing Catholic institutions with business programs for higher education is in the identification, hiring and retention of leading educators who are able to converse, and be committed to the traditions of Catholic Social Teachings (CST). This study was undertaken to examine the preparedness of business faculty to incorporate CST into their business curriculum.*

## **Introduction**

“Most issues facing business leaders are, in the final analysis, questions of judgment.” (Bennis, W. G. & O’Toole, J. 2005, p. 4.) The development of students’ abilities to evaluate a situation, using available facts and projections, is based on critical thinking skills and soft skills that are not easily taught in the classroom setting. Further, “Business professors too often forget that executive decision makers are not fact collectors; they are fact users and integrators” (Bennis, W. G. & O’Toole, J., 2005, p. 6). Throughout their careers, students increasingly will be called upon to make decisions related to moral, ethical, and cultural issues. This is true for all students, but is an essential element for students in non-secular universities.

“Aristotle taught that genuine leadership consisted in the ability to identify and serve the common good. To do so requires much more than technical training. It requires an education in moral reasoning, which must include history, philosophy, literature, theology, and logic” (Bennis, W. G. & O’Toole, J. 2005, p. 10). John Paul II in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, p. 5, stated “In a Catholic University, research necessarily includes (a) the search for an integration of knowledge, (b) a dialogue between faith and reason, and (c) an ethical concern and (d) a theological perspective”. The search for integration and the continuing dialogue between faith and reason takes place across campus and requires interdisciplinary communication.

“...teachers are called to be witnesses and educators of authentic Christian life, which evidences attained integration between faith and life, and between professional competence, and Christian wisdom” (John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, p. 7). The challenge for universities lies in the fact that business faculty do not feel they are adequately prepared to incorporate the key principles of Catholic Social Teaching - human dignity, community and the common good, rights and responsibilities, option for the poor and vulnerable, participation, dignity of work, stewardship of creation, global solidarity, constructive role for government, and promotion of peace – into their classrooms.

## **References**

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